

Message Text

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47

ACTION SCS-03

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 SCA-01 PPT-01 SY-05

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FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2203

INFO AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY BAMAKO

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CASC, PINT, SS

SUBJ: TRAVEL THROUGH SPANISH SAHARA

REF: A. NOUAKCHOTT 1204

B. RABAT 2912

1. DIRGEN OF SAHARAN AFFAIRS IN PRESIDENCY TOLD EMBOFF
OVER A YEAR AGO THAT GOS DID NOT OBJECT TO TRAVEL BY
AMERICAN CITIZENS THROUGH SPANISH SAHARA, BUT WANTED TO
POINT OUT THAT TRANSPORTATION WAS SO UNRELIABLE AND
CONSEQUENTLY DANGEROUS THAT GOS WANTED ALL TRAVELERS TO BE
FOREWARNED ABOUT RISKS. DIRGEN SAID ROADS WERE AT BEST
TRAILS IN SOME AREAS AND SPANISH AUTHORITIES WERE OFTEN
CALLED UPON TO LOOK FOR LOST TRAVELERS SEEKING THEIR WAY
IN DESERT AREAS.

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2. IN VIEW OF INCREASED MILITARY TENSIONS AROUND SAHARA

BORDER AREAS, AND INCREASE OF TERRORIST INCIDENTS INTERNALLY,
TRAVEL BY VISITORS IS MORE DANGEROUS THAN NORMALLY.
WE ALSO NOTE THAT WHILE SPANISH HAVE NOT OFFICIALLY ORDERED
EVACUATION OF DEPENDENTS FROM SAHARA, LARGE PERCENTAGE OF WIVES AND
CHILDREN HAVE JUDGED SECURITY SITUATION SERIOUS ENOUGH TO
WARRENT THEIR DEPARTURE. MOREOVER, SINCE SECURITY MISSION OF SPANISH
ARMED FORCES AND POLICE FORCES OBVIOUSLY NOW HAS HIGH PRIORITY,
THEY PROBABLY ARE LESS ABLE TO ASSIST TRAVELERS OR HELP FIND
THOSE THAT MIGHT BECOME LOST IN AREA.

3. IN VIEW OF FOREGOING CIRCUMSTANCES, THEREFORE, EMBASSY AGREES
WITH POSITIONS IN REFTELS THAT TRAVEL BY AMERICAN CITIZENS
IN SPANISH SAHARA BE DISCOURAGED.
STABLER

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